

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-13 are pending in this application.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-7 and 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Brofman et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,968,670) in view of *Evans et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,632,434). As will be explained in more detail below, the combination of *Brofman et al.* in view of *Evans et al.* does not raise a *prima facie* case of obviousness against the subject matter defined in independent claim 1, as presented herein.

In support of the obviousness rejection, the Examiner alleges that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention “to replace the solder encapsulant with a polyamide in order to ensure a strong joint (see *Evans* col. 1, ll. 10-45) and to modify the method of *Brofman* to utilize the temperature range in order to ensure the solder is completely reflowed (see *Brofman* col. 7, ll. 1-20).” Office Action at page 3.

Applicants respectfully traverse the obviousness rejection as being improper because the requisite suggestion to combine the references in the manner proposed by the Examiner is lacking. In particular, nothing in the *Evans et al.* reference would have provided one having ordinary skill in the art with a motive to modify the expandable solder bumps means shown in *Brofman et al.* to include a polyamide instead of solder. The *Evans et al.* reference describes a device for attaching an electronic component to a substrate. The pertinent portion of the *Evans et al.* reference relied upon by the Examiner states as follows: “Attachment of chips to substrates on multichip modules and hybrid packages is generally accomplished with adhesives (epoxies, polyimides), hard solders (AuSi, AuSn), or flip-chip solder bumps (PbSn). Hard solders offer considerable thermal, mechanical, and electrical advantages over adhesives and flip-chip processes.” *Evans et al.* at column 1, lines 39-44. The *Brofman et al.* reference discloses a flip-chip application that uses expandable solder bumps. The only material

suggested in the *Evans et al.* reference for use in flip-chip solder bumps is PbSn. As such, even if it is assumed that the *Evans et al.* reference is properly combinable with the *Brofman et al.* reference (a proposition with which Applicants disagree), nothing in the *Evans et al.* reference would have motivated one having ordinary skill in the art to replace the expandable solder bumps shown in the *Brofman et al.* reference with a polyimide.

The Examiner's obviousness rejection is premised on the alleged interchangeability of solder and polyimide taught in the *Evans et al.* reference. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has mischaracterized the teachings of the *Evans et al.* reference in this regard. The above-quoted sentence in the *Evans et al.* reference merely lists a variety of materials that have been used in different packaging applications, i.e., adhesives, hard solders, and flip-chip solder bumps. Regarding adhesives, the materials cited by *Evans et al.* include epoxies and polyimides, and Applicants would agree that the *Evans et al.* reference establishes that epoxies and polyimides are equivalent adhesives for purposes of packaging applications in which chips are mounted to substrates on multichip modules and hybrid packages *using adhesives*. Applicants respectfully disagree, however, that the *Evans et al.* reference establishes the interchangeability of solder and polyimide for purposes of the claimed subject matter. The *Evans et al.* reference merely cites polyimides as exemplary adhesives that have been used in packaging applications that use adhesives. On the other hand, the focus of the claimed subject matter is the elongation of a solder joint using an expander, which is encapsulated by an encapsulant. In the *Brofman et al.* reference, the encapsulant is a solder material, and the *Brofman et al.* reference goes to great lengths to describe the multiple fabrication steps required to form the casted solder encapsulant. The *Evans et al.* reference has nothing at all to do with the formation of elongated solder joints. As such, nothing in the *Evans et al.* reference would have provided one having ordinary skill in the art with a motive to replace the solder

encapsulant shown in the *Brofman et al.* reference with another material, much less a polyimide.

In summary, it is axiomatic that an obviousness rejection based on combination of references is proper only if the prior art would have suggested to one having ordinary skill in the art the desirability of combining the references in the proposed manner. Here, for at least the reasons set forth above, the *Evans et al.* reference would not have suggested to one having ordinary skill in the art the desirability of replacing the solder encapsulant shown by *Brofman et al.* with a thermoplastic material such as a polyimide. In the absence of the requisite suggestion to combine the references in the manner proposed, the combination of *Brofman et al.* in view of *Evans et al.* is improper and, consequently, does not raise a *prima facie* case of obviousness against the subject matter defined in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, independent claim 1, as presented herein, is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of *Brofman et al.* in view of *Evans et al.* Claims 2-7 and 9-13, each of which depends directly or indirectly from claim 1, are likewise patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of *Brofman et al.* in view of *Evans et al.* for at least the same reasons set forth above regarding claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of claims 1-7 and 9-13, as presented herein, and submit that these claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at **(408) 749-6902**. If any additional fees are due in

Application No. 10/667,008
Request for Reconsideration dated May 30, 2006
Response to Final Office Action mailed January 31, 2006

connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. AGSGP010).

Respectfully submitted,
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